



Natural Resources Conservation Service
1201 NE Lloyd Blvd., Suite 900
Portland, OR 97232

April 1, 2008

OREGON BULLETIN NO. OR-210-2008-03

SUBJECT: Outside Sources of Engineering Assistance

PURPOSE: Disseminate electronic information to all area and field offices.

EXPIRATION DATE: Until Superseded

This bulletin provides guidance and clarification on the use of non-NRCS engineering services. Information in this bulletin is contained in the National Engineering Manual Part 505 and applies to non-watershed project work for programs such as WRP, WHIP, EQIP and EWP. This bulletin addresses non-NRCS engineering services provided by an individual or company providing design services for any practice or project in which NRCS program funds are being disbursed but does not apply to engineering services that are provided by a technical service provider that is selected by the landowner through the TechReg web site.

In the case of engineering services provided by a technical service provider selected by the landowner through TechReg, the technical service provider is required to sign a Certification Agreement stipulating that they will design all practices in accordance with applicable NRCS standards and specifications negating the requirement for a functional review as described by this bulletin. Although not required, a functional review of work by a designer selected by the landowner through the TechReg web site may be performed at the discretion of the NRCS. Design and construction quality control activities performed by technical service providers selected through TechReg will be spot checked to ensure compliance with the Certification Agreement and failure to comply with the Certification Agreement will result in their removal from the list of TechReg providers.

Requirements for the use of non-NRCS engineering services that are not hired by the landowner through TechReg are as follows:

- The NRCS shall provide the non-NRCS engineer with appropriate pre-design information at the request of the non-NRCS engineer, landowner or sponsor.
- The non-NRCS engineer shall certify on the drawings that "to the best of my professional knowledge these plans and specifications meet all applicable NRCS standards."

- The NRCS employee with job approval authority that is consistent with the project an/or practice shall perform a functional review to insure, as a minimum, that the design and construction documents submitted by the non-NRCS engineer shall:
 1. Achieve the objectives of the plan.
 2. Meet or exceed applicable NRCS practice standards.
 3. Comply with applicable State and Federal programs.
 4. Include design computations that are clear and complete.
 5. Include an Inspection plan.
 6. Include an Operation and Maintenance plan.
 7. Include drawings and specifications which clearly specify the work to be done.
 8. Not endanger public health and safety.
 9. Provide drawings and specifications that are consistent and compatible with all other provisions of the contract document(s).
 10. Seal all final documents such as drawings, specifications and design reports as required by ORS 672.020(2) and the Oregon NRCS Skills Matrix.

Prior to the functional review by the NRCS, an adequate technical review will be performed by the non-NRCS engineer to insure a high quality design/construction package has been assembled and submitted. The requirement to perform a functional review by the NRCS does not preclude NRCS from performing a full review at our discretion.

If, in the professional judgment of the NRCS, the submitted design package is lacking and additional technical analysis and/or design documentation is needed, the design should be returned to the non-NRCS engineer for re-work and notify, in writing, the non-NRCS engineer that we have reviewed the project and the design is lacking and the reasons why. Design deficiencies may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Technically – the design assumptions or procedures are not in conformance with NRCS standards or sound engineering practice.
- Documentation – the information provided that is intended to communicate the design, construction or operation and maintenance is missing, inadequate or inconsistent.
- Missing or deficient O and M Agreement.
- Missing Inspection Plan.

In those cases where the non-NRCS engineer is providing quality assurance during installation, the NRCS representative may make construction site visits to view the works of improvement to be sure that practices are being installed according to plans and specifications. All significant changes in the quantities or design should be approved in advance by the NRCS representative.

Once the practice has been installed the non-NRCS engineer, landowner or sponsor will submit final as-built drawings with a certification by the engineer of record that "to the best of my professional knowledge this practice has been installed in accordance with the plans and specifications and meets all applicable NRCS standards."

//signed//

David R. Dishman

State Conservation Engineer

Enclosure

DIST:

AO

cc via website:

<http://www.or.nrcs.usda.gov/intranet/bulletins/bulletins07-08.html>

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